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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SPD LEADERSHIP IN CONTROL AT OPENING SESSIONS
OF PARTY CONGRESS

REF: BONN 5135

SUMMARY: OPENING SESSIONS OF THE HANNOVER SPD PARTY
CONGRESS HAVE BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY STRONG STATEMENTS
FROM PARTY LEADERS IN FAVOR OF THE MODERATE POLICIES
OF THE GODESBERG PROGRAM AND THE DORTMUND PARTY PLATFORM
AND BY A FAILURE OF THE MUCH EXPECTED LEFT- WING REVOLT
TO MATERIALIZE AS A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE PARTY
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LEADERSHIP. MUCH ATTENTION HAS BEEN PAID TO PRESENTATIONS BY WEHNER AND SCHMIDT AND TO A WIDE- RANGING ADDRESS BY CHANCELLOR BRANDT, ALL OF WHICH WARNED PARTY DELEGATES OF THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE FACED IF THE SPD WERE TO VEER FROM ITS PRESENT COURSE. THE CHANCELLOR' S STATEMENT CONTAINED AN ESPECIALLY STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE AND FRIENDSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES. FIRST REPORTS FROM THE SCENE ARE THAT THE ATMOSPHERE IN HANNOVER IS RELAXED AND INDICATE THAT THE CHANCELLOR WILL BE ABLE TO GAIN APPROVAL FOR HIS IDEAS. END SUMMARY

1. PARTY LEADERS EXERTED CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS IN THE DAYS BEFORE THE OPENING OF THE SPD CONGRESS TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE CHANCELLOR' S APRIL 11 ADDRESS. BRANDT GATHERED WITH THE PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD IN HANNOVER APRIL 9 TO GO OVER LAST PLANS OFR THE WEEK' S EVENTS. THIS MEETING WAS FOLLOWED BY STATEMENTS OF OF SUPPORT FROM MANY NATIONAL AND LOCAL SPD OFFICIALS, ALL OF WHOM WARNED AGAINST ADOPTION OF THE MORE RADICAL MOTIONS PUT FORWARD BY THE JUSO' S AND OTHER LEFT- WING REPRESENTATIVES.

2. THE FIRST MAJOR EVENT OF THE WEEK WAS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN WEHNER' S TRADITIONAL PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE EVE OF THE PARTY CONGRESS. WEHNER, WHO IS NOT RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION TO THE PARTY' S EXECUTIVE BOARD, EXPRESSED THROUGH AND AT TIMES EMOTIONAL CRITICISM OF THE IDEAS AND TACTICS OF THE PARTY' S LEFT WING. HE ADMITTED THAT INNER- PARTY DIFFERENCES HAD IN THE LAST WEEKS BROUGHT DIFFICULTIES FOR THE SPD, BUT REFUSED TO ADMIT THE EXISTENCE OF A SPECIAL GROUP OF " LEFTISTS" IN THE PARTY' S RANKS. HE REFERRED ONLY TO " OPPONENTS OF THE GODESBERG PROGRAM", FOR WHOM HE RESERVED MOST OF HIS CRITICISM. WHENER ARGUED THAT IF THESE OPPONENTS HAD ONLY TAKEN THE TIME TO READ THE GODESBERG PROGRAM INSTEAD OF PREFERRING TO CONCENTRATE ON MARXISM FROM THE 19 TH CENTURY, THEY WOULD FIND MANY " SHARP EDGES" WHICH PROVED JUST HOW PROGRESSIVE THE IDEAS OF THE SPD WERE. WHENER SAID THE RESULTS OF THIS WEEK' S DELIBERATIONS WOULD BE DECISIVE FOR THE ABILITY OF THE SPD TO MAINTAIN ITS NATIONAL COALITION WITH THE FDP. HE SAID THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRAMATIC DECISIONS TAKEN IN HANNOVER WOULD THEN BE

THE SUBJECT OF DETAILED DISCUSSION WITHIN THE FRAKTION
IN WEEKS AND MONTHS TO COME.

3. THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON TUESDAY MORNING WAS DELIVERED
BY DEPUTY PARTY CHAIRMAN AND FINANCE MINISTER HELMUT
SCHMIDT. SCHMIDT DELIVERED A CLEAR COMMITMENT TO THE
CONCEPT OF THE SPD AS A BROAD- BASED " VOLKSPARTEI" AND
WARNED DELEGATES AGAINST DEPARTING FROM THE PROGRAMS
CONTAINED IN THE DORTMUND PARTY PLATFORM. SCHMIDT
BASED THE PARTY'S CLEAR VICTORY IN THE
NOVEMBER ELECTIONS ON THE FACT THAT TH SPD WITH BRANDT
AS ITS LEADER HAD GIVEN A CLEAR INDICATION OF WHAT IT
INTENDED TO DO IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS AND WHICH PHILO-
SOPHY IT INTENDED TO FOLLOW TO ACCOMPLISH ITS AIMS. IN
SCHMIDT'S VIEW THERE COULD BE NO DEPARTING FROM THIS
BASIC PRINCIPLE. THE SPD WAS AND WOULD REMAIN A PARTY
OF THE LEFT, BUT TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS IT WOULD HAVE TO

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OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF BROAD SEGMENTS OF THE GERMAN POPULATION. ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO THE OPPONENTS OF THIS POLICY SCHMIDT CONCLUDED: " THOSE WHO WISH IN HANNOVER TO REPUDIATE, PUSH ASIDE OR REDUCE WHAT THEY AGREED TO SIX MONTHS AGO IN DORTMUND WILL REDUCE OUR CREDIBILITY AND OUR TRUSTWORTHINESS, WHETHER THEY WANT TO OR NOT."

4. THE CHANCELLOR ECHOED THE CALL FOR PRESERVATION OF THE PARTY'S CREDIBILITY IN HIS MAJOR POLICY ADDRESS ON THE MORNING OF APRIL 11. IN A STATEMENT WHICH DREW
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HEAVY APPLAUSE FROM THE DELEGATES AND AUDIENCE IN HANNOVER, BRANDT SAID " THE CREDIBILITY UPON WHICH THE ELECTION SUCCESS OF NOVEMBER 19 IS BASED MUST REMAIN THE DECISIVE CHAPTER FOR THE PARTY. THIS MEANS THAT WE MUST DEFEAT EVERY ATTEMPT TO DIVIDE THE PARTY BETWEEN SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS." BRANDT ADDED THAT THIS CREDIBILITY WAS ALSO SUPPORTED THROUGH CONTINUATION OF THE SPD'S COALITION WITH THE LIBERAL FDP. " THIS ALLIANCE GIVES GERMAN DEMOCRACY THE STABILITY WHICH IT NEEDS IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL CHANGE." BRANDT JOINED WEHNER AND SCHMIDT IN PLACING HEAVIEST EMPHASIS ON THE GODESBERG PROGRAM AND THE DORTMUND PARTY PLATFORM. HE SAID THAT THE POLICIES OF HIS GOVERNMENT AGREED WITH THE DORTMUND PLATFORM TO THE EXTENT WHICH WAS POSSIBLE IN A COALITION WITH ANOTHER PARTY, AND CALLED TO THE DELEGATES TO SUPPORT HIS POLICIES. IN HIS WORDS: " THIS PARTY CONGRESS MUST CONFIRM THAT AFTER THE ELECTION SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WILL ADHERE TO WHAT THEY SAID BEFORE THE ELECTION. NOTHING SHOULD REMAIN IN DOUBT HERE."

5. THE CHANCELLOR ALSO FOCUSED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION ON FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS. HE CLAIMED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD REMOVED THE " IDEOLOGICAL FRIGIDITY" FROM GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY AND HAD CONTRIBUTED TO A PROCESS WHICH WAS CHANGING EUROPE AND GIVING MORE FREEDOM OF MANEUVER TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. BRANDT STATED THAT THIS POLICY WAS BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF GOOD

NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS WITH ALL OF ITS PARTNERS ON THE CONTINENT, INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION, POLAND AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE WARSAW PACT. ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TROOP REDUCTIONS WOULD HELP CLEAR THE ROAD TO THE GOAL OF ENDING WAR ON THE CONTINENT FOREVER. BRANDT SAID THAT THE UPCOMING VISIT OF SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF BREZHNEV TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WOULD CONFIRM " THAT IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, THE ELEMENT OF COOPERATION IS GAINING IN IMPORTANCE."

6. BRANDT STATED THAT THE DANGER OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC BECOMING ISOLATED WITHIN THE WESTERN COMMUNITY HAD LONG SINCE BEEN OVERCOME. HIS TRIP TO WASHINGTON IN MAY REFLECTED, " THE DESIRE WHICH I SHARE WITH PRESIDENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NIXON TO CONTINUE IN DIRECT TALKS THE INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE A DAILY MATTER OF COURSE." IN THIS CONNECTION BRANDT WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE RECENT JUSO CONGRESS HAD NOT PRODUCED ANY RESOLUTIONS AGAINST THE UNITED STATES. HE ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE JUSO' S HAD HAD A VIEW OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE WHICH WAS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE PARTY AS A WHOLE.

7. SINCE THESE DIFFERENCES DID EXIST, BRANDT SAID HE WISHED TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS: " THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IS-- TOGETHER WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES-- THE FIRM BASIS FOR OUR FOREIGN POLICY AND WILL REMAIN SO. WITHOUT THE AMERICAN PRESENCE, THERE COULD BE NO REALISTIC NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING EUROPEAN SECURITY, AND HE WHO ATTEMPTS TO REMOVE THE FRG FROM THE WESTERN ALLIANCE WILL IN REALITY BRING THE DOWNFALL OF OUR POLICY OF DETENTE TOWARDS THE EAST AND WITH THAT THE END OF OUR ACTIVE POLICY TOWARDS PEACE."

8. BRANDT ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IT MUST BECOME CLEAR TO OUR AMERICAN PARTNERS THAT THEY WERE NOW FACING A MORE INDEPENDENT AND MORE SELF- CONFIDENT EUROPE. THE UNITED STATES WAS NOW PRESENTED WITH A SITUATION WHICH IT HAD ALWAYS LISTED AS ONE OF THE MAIN GOALS OF ITS POLICY, I. E. A EUROPE WHICH WAS NO LONGER MERELY AN ELEMENT OF THE POLICIES OF THE SUPER- POWERS. THE CHANCELLOR CONCLUDED: " WESTERN EUROPE WILL CONTINUE TO VIEW THE DIALOGUE WITH THE UNITED STATES AS A DISCUSSION AMONG FRIENDS, WHICH IS CAPABLE OF BEARING CRITICISM, DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AND EVEN TENSIONS."

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9. TURNING TO GERMAN POLICIES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, BRANDT ASKED THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THE PARTY TO REMEMBER THAT PATIENCE IS OFTEN NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE ONE'S GOAL IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD. REPLYING TO CRITICISM OF GERMAN RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES SUCH AS GREECE, THE CHANCELLOR SAID: " THIS CRITICISM SHOULD NOT HAVE THE EFFECT THAT WE LIMIT OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS TO THE STATES WHICH FOLLOW OUR PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND IN WHICH POLITICAL OPPONENTS ARE NOT HARASSED. IT IS THE OBLIGATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALSO TO

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REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WITH THESE STATES."

10. BRANDT ALSO ADDED TO HIS SPEECH A COMMENT ON THE VISIT OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRESIDENT THIEU. ADMITTING THAT THE SITUATION CAUSED BY THE THIEU VISIT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT, BRANDT SAID THAT PRESIDENT HEINEMANN HAD HANDLED HIMSELF " IN A WAY EXPECTED BY OUR PEOPLE FROM THEIR HEAD OF STATE." BRAND ADDED THAT SOMETIMES ONE RECEIVED " VISITORS WHO ONE WOULD RATHER SEE LEAVE THAN COME," BUT SAID THAT HEINEMANN HAD USED THE OCCASION OF HIS DISCUSSION WITH THIEU TO MAKE A LARGE NUMBER OF THE POINTS SUPPORTED BY THE DEMONSTRATORS WHO HAD MARCHED IN BONN THE DAY BEFORE. BRANDT CONCLUDED WITH A CLEAR CONDEMNATION OF THE VANDALISM WHICH HAD ACCOMPANIED THE DEMONSTRATIONS. HE SAID THAT SUCH ACTIVITIES COULD UNDER NO CONDITION BE SEEN AS AN EXPRESSION OF POLITICAL VIEWS. (THE OFFICIAL FRG GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN MADE SIMILAR CONDEMNATORY REMARKS ON THE DEMONSTRATIONS AT HIS APRIL 11 PRESS CONFERENCE).

11. EMBASSY COMMENT: AS DID WEHNER IN HIS MONDAY PRESS CONFERENCE, BRANDT PEPPERED HIS FIRM COMMENTS ON THE NEED FOR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF PRESENT SPD POLICIES WITH OFFERS TO CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF POLICY ALTERNATIVES BOTH WITHIN THE SPD BUNDESTAG FRAKTION AND WITHIN THE PARTY AS A WHOLE. THE TACTIC OF THE SPD LEADERSHIP, WHICH SEEMS TO HAVE MET WITH CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS, HAS CLEARLY BEEN TO SOUND A WARNING AGAINST THE MORE EXTREME VIEWS OF THE PARTY'S LEFT WING, WITHOUT SEEMING TO FORECLOSE THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME EVOLUTION OF SPD POLICIES.

12. REACTION TO THIS TACTIC AND TO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF HAS BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE. FIRST REPORTS WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM HANNOVER INDICATE THAT THE LEADERSHIP IS COMPLETELY IN CONTROL AND THAT THE ATMOSPHERE IN NO WAY RESUMBLES THE HECTIC PACE OF THE LAST FEW WEEKS. FIRST COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE SPD LEFT WING HAVE CONFIRMED THIS IMPRESSION. ONE LEFTIST WAS QUOTED BY DPA AS SAYING THAT THE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH WAS SO GOOD THAT IT ITSELF COULD HAVE REPLACED

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THE REMAINING DISCUSSION AT THE PARTY CONGRESS. BOTH JUSO CHIEF ROTH AND THE TITULAR LEADER OF THE PARTY' S LEFT WING SCHLESWIG- HOLSTEIN SPD CHIEF STEFFEN HAVE DECLARED THEMSELVES SATISFIED WITH THE SPEECH. TALKING TO REPORTS AFTER THE ADDRESS, ROTH STATED CLEARLY THAT THE JUSOS WOULD CONTINUE TO BASE THEIR POLICIES ON THE GODESBERG PROGRAM.

13. DISCUSSION WILL CONTINUE IN HANNOVER TODAY WITH A PROGRESS REPORT ON PARTY POLICIES BY HERBERT WEHNER. THIS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY DETAILED DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION IN WORKING GROUPS AND IN PLENARY SESSIONS. THE NEXT MAJOR TESTS FOR THE LEADERSHIP WILL COME LATER IN THE WEEK WHEN FINAL VOTES ARE HELD ON THE RESOLUTIONS AND WHEN THE NEW PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD IS ELECTED, PROBABLY ON THE LAST DAY OF THE CONGRESS. SEVERAL WELL- KNOWN MEMBERS ARE REPORTED TARGETS FOR THE LEFTISTS.
HILLENBRAND

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